[6 cont.]

105 177 However, at the beginning the fundamental change in their economy did not affect their most characteristic social institutions. They preserved, almost to the present, their family organization based on the uterine line of kinship and all the other institutions which derive from, or are directly or indirectly related, to it. Only now with the presence of an ever increasing number of foreign elements who are attracted to La Guajira territory by different circumstances is the Indian gradually losing these fundamental ideas of his organization and beginning to change them, forced to do so by events, to the point that today it is becoming difficult to decide up to what point a social phenomenon is autochthonous and to what point it is impregnated with new ideas brought in by evangelists, government and military officials, and traders.

144 175 In the racial aspect the phenomenon shows up less strongly, although, as in other aspects, it has been gradually accelerating as means of communication develop and the contraband between the islands of Aruba and Curaçao, the department of Magdalena, and the port of Maracaibo increase. Racial mixing [mestizaje] began in the colony not only between Spaniards and Indians, as happened in the greater part of Latin America, but also with the Negroes who were acquired as slaves from the Dutch and British slave traders in exchange for pearls. Naturally, this mixture was of insignificant proportions, but [7] at the present time it is developing more rapidly, stemming from the element, also Negroid, of the coastal areas of Colombia and Lake Maracaibo. In spite of all this, at the present time one can still find a large percentage of the pure element in La Guajira, especially in the regions distant from the traffic with Maracaibo or with the interior of Colombia, or relatively isolated from civilizado centers of La Guajira such as Uribia, Puerto Estrella, Puerto López, etc.

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132 031 In the past five to six years La Guajira has suffered extremely severe summers which have almost completely crushed its economic bases, stock grazing and agriculture, for scarcely enough rainfall has fallen to save their pastures or their harvests.

[7 cont.]

132 Consequently at this time, the Indian faces a situation of misery
731 that has brought him to seek monetary income either as a worker in the maritime saltworks or as a herdsman in the neighboring haciendas of Venezuela and Colombia; or if he is obstinate in his attachment to his native soil, he has to put up with conditions of hunger, bond service, and even slavery in his own territory.

166 The lack of water has been the main factor leading to the
464 mass emigration of entire native families to the nearest centers of trade and work; there they enroll themselves as paid farm workers; or simply beg for charity, which is frequently seen in the streets and plazas of Maracaibo; or apply themselves to some other trade such as the making of charcoal to be sold in Ríohacha; or work in the loading and unloading of ships in neighboring ports.

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121 All these facts that we have been describing and the little
114 that was known of this interesting Colombian aboriginal community led the Institute of Ethnology and Archaeology of the Ministry of National Education of Colombia to organize an expedition to study for a reasonable period of time the greater part of the characteristic social phenomena of this group of people, the actual social situation of the natives confronted by the new conditions of life, the anthropological aspect, the language, etc. This decision was put into effect with the ethnographic expedition of 1947, which, during the months of July, August, and September, traveled over a great part of the territory making the corresponding studies. [8] This expedition was composed of: the investigators, Licentiate Milcíades Chaves, Licentiate Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda Giraldo, Señora María Rosa de Recasens, and the author.

The result of these investigations is the work we now present, the first of a series of publications which will cover the major part of the aspects of the material and spiritual life of the Guajiro.

The work to which these few lines serve as an introduction is based on facts carefully gathered by us in the field, especially by my wife Licentiate Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda Giraldo, who kindly handed over data to be studied and added to ours, and we

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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576 You always rein in before a rancho and wait for those inside to call to you. If no one comes, it is best to continue on your way, for either you are not welcome or your prospective host is not at home. We halted outside this rancho
574 and after a short wait a friendly voice called '*anshi pia*' 'You
262 have come?' and we answered '*aa*', yes. We were then invited to halt and entertained with sour goat's milk and boiled goat's meat. In exchange we gave them a little maize, which is an expensive article there and not easily come by. Vegetables and fruit are even greater rarities. Naturally
262 they eat the fruit of the fig-cactus during its season. It has a faint smell, but is refreshing. There is also a tree with fruit like olives, and which the whites call olives, and the Indians eat them, but they are said to be poisonous, at least in large quantities. This tree has the great advantage that, to all intents and purposes, it never withers. At that time we were not yet tired of goat's meat and could eat the fare they offered us. It is the staple food of Guajira, however, and in the end we got more than enough of it. Even at this place we thought that everything tasted or smelled of goat, not only the meat and milk, but the water, the huts and the surroundings as well.

312 We went with our animals when they were to be watered, to see that they got enough. Many Indians and quite a number of cattle had gathered round the casimba, for it was to one of those we went. They had dug deep into the river bed, making a funnel-shaped hole several score feet in circumference and, as far as we could see, some thirty feet deep. During the rains this casimba overflowed and normally it was half full, they told us, but now there was only a little running in at the bottom.

The sand was firm enough there for them to have cut [482] steps, and the Indians were climbing up and down the whole time with large jars which they emptied into troughs made of long, hollowed divi-divi trunks, from which the animals drank greedily.

[415] The women fetched their water there in calabashes or earthenware vessels. An Indian who spoke a little Spanish
312 ●731 told us how desperate their plight had been a few years

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before, when the casimba had dried up and the cattle had roamed round the troughs bellowing till they collapsed and died. The horses, on the other hand, had given up the ghost without complaint.

The water was already turgid; before long it would be as thick as gruel. The water we had been given by the bishop was now finished, and we had to boil the water from the casimba, which had a beastly taste and did not quench our thirst because of the salt in it. The best water is that near the coast.

The cattle and horses were thin, but the men at the well looked strong and well-nourished, as did the women. But how would they look by the time October came with its rain? It was then only July. And suppose no rain came? Or only a few showers? That had happened before. The threat of it always hung over the Indians. If the rain god Juvap turned his face from them, they were lost. There were still patches of grass here and there, but it was dry and scorched. If need be the cattle could make do with cactus, despite the long spikes that could pierce a stout leather shoe with ease. Very, very carefully the cow lets one of the oval leaves slide into her mouth, almost sucking it in, so that the spikes are bent backwards; she then starts chewing as hard as she can. Often cows have more cactus stuck in their hides than they get inside them. Horses and mules, on the other hand, apparently do not like cactus and will not do more than nibble at it. It is too slow a business to eat it. The goats seemed able to find something to eat everywhere, and are themselves eaten sooner or later. Cattle are not often slaughtered, but goat is the daily fare. Live goats are also taken as provisions on journeys, being easily led on a rope.

We had halted only in order to let the animals drink and for the Indians to fill their water containers. The Gaffer needed a lot of water now—his thirst was unbounded—but the calabashes were in his wife's charge and she only allowed him an occasional gulp. Also he was having to walk, for she was tired and had mounted the donkey again. The Lad tried to enliven the company by imitating the donkeys when they